

Message Text

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S E C R E T AMMAN 10090

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: FPR JO SY EG XF UNSC UR

SUBJECT: TALK WITH PM RIFAI-SOVIET VISIT AND NEXT STEPS AT UNSC

BEGIN SUMMARY: RIFAI REPORTS THAT SOVIETS SEEMED AT SEA ABOUT SYRIAN POSITION AT UPCOMING UNSC AND URGED JORDANIANS TO PUSH SYRIANS TOWARD MODERATE POSITION. RIFAI SAYS SOVIET POSITION SEEMS CLOSE TO US, BUT THEY INSIST ON ENDORSEMENT BY UNSC OF THREE PRINCIPLES--TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, AND FULL COMMITMENT TO PEACE BY ALL STATES IN THE AREA. RIFAI NOW PLANS TO TRY TO SEE ASAD THIS COMING WEEKEND AND WORK OUT TEXT. HE HOPED THAT TEXT WILL BE MODERATE BUT AT MINIMUM WILL INVOLVE SOME STATEMENT OF ABOVE THREE PRINCIPLES. HE URGED US TO GO ALONG WITH SUCH A TEXT. AFTER SEEING SYRIANS HE HOPES TO COORDINATE TEXT WITH EGYPT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON DECEMBER 31 I ASKED RIFAI FOR A REPORT ON JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO MOSCOW WHICH HAD JUST RETURNED TO AMMAN. RIFAI SAID THAT ALMOST ALL OF THE EXCHANGES, AND MOST OF WHAT THE SOVIETS HAD TO SAY HAD BEEN ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES. BUT HE ADDED THERE HAD BEEN ONE INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT. THE SOVIETS HAD ASKED THE JORDANIANS "WHAT IS THE SYRIAN POSITION"? AND THEN URGED THE JORDANIANS TO BE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON THE

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SYRIANS IN THE PREPARATION OF ANY RESOLUTION TEXT.

2. RIFAI EXPLAINED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BEING VERY MODERATE AND IN THIS RESPECT WERE VERY CLOSE TO THE US POSITION. THEY TOLD THE JORDANAINS THAT THEY WANTED AN CONSTRUCTIVE SESSION AND HOPED THAT THAT ARABS WOULD BE MODERATE BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE BOUND TO SUPPORT WHATEVER ARAB POSITION WAS ARRIVED AT. IN SPECIFIC TERMS THE SOVIETS WANTED TO SEE ACCEPTANCE IN ANY RESOLUTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THREE PRINCIPLES: (A) COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY OCCUPIED IN 1967 (B) ACCEPTANCE OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. AND (C) A COMMITMENT TO PEACE BY ALL THE STATES IN THE AREA.

3. IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET POSITION RIFAI SAID HE PLANS NOW TO VISIT ASAD IN DAMASCUS TAKING WITH HIM THE DELEGATION THAT WENT TO MOSCOW AND IN PARTICULAR HIS UNCLE, SENATOR ABDUL MONEM RIFAI AND JORDANA'S HAMID SHARAF. THIS WILL AVOID BOTH HAVING TO WAIT IN AMMAN FOR KHADDAM TO COME HERE AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED TO THE EMBARRASMENT TO KHADDAM OF HAVING TO GO OVER HIS HEAD TO ASAD IS KHADDAM IS UNREASONBLY TOUGH ON THE RESOLUTION AS HE PREDICTABLY MIGHT BE. FINALLY RIFAI SAYS THE TACTIC WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE "CURE OF THE ARABS" EXCESSIVE HOSPITALITY "I CAN ALWAYS GET MORE FROM ASAD IN DAMASCUS THAN I CAN HERE IN AMMAN."

4. RIFAI SAYS HE PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GO TO DAMASCUS UNTIL SUNDAY JANUARY 4. HE WOULD COME BACK IMMEDIATELY AND LEAVE THE MOSCOW DELEGATION TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS OF THE LANGUAGE WITH SYRAINS RETURNING TO AMMAN PROBABLY ON THE SIXTH.

5. ON SUBSTANCE RIFAI SAID HE WILL WORK FOR MODERATE RESOLUTION BUT THE BEST HE COULD COME UP WITH WILL HAVE TO IN SOME WAY ENDORSE THE THREE PRINCIPLES NOTED ABOVE. HE SAYS THE SOVIETS WANT TO AVOID A US VETA AND SEE THE UNCS AS A HELPFUL PRECEDNE FOR AND STEP TOWARD GENEVA. HE HOPED
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THE US WILL GO ALONG WITH THIS KING OS RESOLUTION. SO THERE WOULD BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING I REPEATED FOR HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD OF OUR POSITION WHEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON WAS HERE AND THAT I HAD REPEATED IT FOR HIM AGAIN TWO DAYS AGO. I HAD NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND WAS NOT EMPOWERED TO NEGOTIATE WITH HIM ON TEXT. WHAT HE SUGGESTED WAS CLEARLY NOT WHAT HE HAD TOLD HIM OUR POSITION WAS

HE REAFFIRMED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THIS BUT STILL HOPED
THAT THE DISCUSSIONS IN NEW YORK MIGHT BE
ABLE TO WORK OUT SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE.

6. AFTER COORDINATION WITH SYRIAN RIFAI SAID
NEXT STEP WOULD BE SEND A DELEGATION TO
CAIRO. KING WILL SHORTLY BE SENDING A PERSONAL LETTER
TO SADAT SUGGESTING THAT IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO
ARRIVE AT A JOINT JORDANIAN SYRIAN POSITION JORDAN
WILL BRING THAT POSITION TO CAIRO IN AN EFFORT TO
WORK OUT A TRIPARTITE APPROACH. THE STRESS WILL BE
ON ACHIEVING SOME UNITY AND RIFAI SAYS
INCIDENTALLY THAT IF THIS CAN BE DONE, IT MAY
WELL HELP TO FURTHER SOFTEN THE CRITICISMS AND
RECRIMINATIONS OVER SINAI II OR IF NOT I MIGHT MAKE
SUCH ACTIVITIES ON THE PART OF EGYPT AND SYRIA MORE
DIFFICULT.

7. RIFAI SAYS HE IS NOT SURE OF SADAT'S ATTITUDE
"SADAT IS MAD AT US. HE MAY WANT TO DELAY A WHILE.
BUT IF WE CAN PERSUADE HIM WE WILL TRY TO SEND A
DELEGATION ON JANUARY 7 OR 8 TO DO THE FINAL COORDINATING
WITH EGYPT".

8. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT PASS CAIRO AND DAMASCUS.
PICKERING

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